

# **national park service**

For Immediate Release  
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## **Temporary Road Closure for Continued Elk Research at Point Reyes National Seashore**

Between December 1-4, 1998, the Tule Elk Reserve will be temporarily closed to the public for elk management and research activities. The Tule Elk Reserve is located on Tomales Point, at the end of Pierce Point Road in the northern section of Point Reyes National Seashore.

During the closure, researchers and resource management will continue implementation of the park's Tule Elk Management Plan. The plan was approved last July after a series of public meetings on an overall plan to manage the herd. Because of a growing population of elk on the reserve, the plan calls for implementing fertility control research program and relocating a trial herd in the park's wilderness area near Limantour Beach.

During December 1-4, approximately 40 animals will be captured using net-guns and processing corrals. Once captured, stock trailers will relocate the elk to the park's wilderness area. A temporary fenced area has been constructed to keep the animals restricted until they become acclimated to the area. The temporary fence will restrict the elk for up to a six-month period. Over the next few years, the radio collared trial herd will be monitored by park staff to determine the feasibility of a free-ranging herd in the park's 32,000 acre wilderness area. Funding for this project was made possible by Canon, USA, Inc.

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**Point Reyes National Seashore**

**Point Reyes Station, California 94956**

The relocated animals will be part of the on-going research evaluating the potential feasibility of using the immuno-contraceptive vaccine for long-term control of the population. The vaccine will be administered to female elk to stimulate the immune system to produce antibodies that block sperm for attaching to the ovum.

At one time, a half million tule elk roamed California's coastal mountains, valleys, and forests; by 1860 only two small herds remained. Today, 22 herds support a population just over 3,000 animals.

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